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FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6502  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 5920  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 6226  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 1467  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 4252  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 5527  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1677  
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA PRIORITY 3651  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1775  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2832  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KATHMANDU 001328

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/11/2017

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SUBJECT: NEPAL: HOME MINISTRY TO HIRE 75,000 POLICE FOR  
POLLS

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

1. (C) During a farewell call July 10 on Home Minister Krishna Sitaula, the Ambassador stressed that the Maoists had miscalculated by assuming that the Nepal Army would acquiesce if the Maoists attempted to seize power. Pushing ahead with the Constituent Assembly polls in November was the best way for Nepal to bring the less violent of the two Maoist factions into the democratic process. The Ambassador emphasized that it was essential, however, that the Home Ministry enforce law and order. Minister Sitaula reported that the Ministry planned to engage 75,000 "temporary" police to provide security for the election. The Ambassador outlined U.S. preparations for resettling at least 60,000 Bhutanese refugees over the next several years. Sitaula agreed that the Ministry had to restore security in the camps so this process could go forward, and noted that 25 police officers would be assigned to each of the seven refugee camps. The Ambassador and the Minister agreed that resettlement should proceed despite opposition by a minority of refugees, and that resettlement would eventually heighten the pressure on Bhutan to allow repatriation. With respect to the peace process, the Ambassador advised the Minister that the most critical role of the Home Ministry was to resist efforts by the Maoists and Madhesi extremists to postpone the election.

The Maoists Have Miscalculated

2. (C) In a farewell call July 10 on Minister of Home Affairs Krishna Sitaula, the Ambassador described the Maoist forces as currently divided into two factions. The first faction, led by Pushpa Kamal Dahal (aka Prachanda), was intent on remaining in the government, forcing more and more concessions from the other parties, and gaining political power gradually; the other faction, led by Mohan Vaidya (aka Kiran) and Ram Bahadur Thapa (aka Badol), wanted to seize power quickly by forcing the collapse of the government. He said both factions had miscalculated by assuming that both the Seven-Party Alliance and the Nepalese Army would

acquiesce in either a gradual or violent Maoist takeover. The Army especially, the Ambassador stressed, would not tolerate power passing to the Maoists, because the officer corps knew they would lose control of the institution and would face a Maoist purge. Even the enlisted ranks had no love for the Maoists because of the Maoist treatment of their families in the countryside. The Ambassador went on to stress that the political parties had to remain united in support of the democratic process and push ahead with the Constituent Assembly election in November. If the parties succeeded in holding the election, the Maoists would have no choice but to remain in the process, and abandon their hopes for absolute power. The very worst scenario for the Maoists, the Ambassador added, would be to become politically isolated.

#### Home Ministry Must Ensure Election Security

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13. (C) The Ambassador pointed out that the role of the Home Ministry in staging the election was crucial to the success of the election, and to Nepal's democratic transition. It was essential that the Government of Nepal (GON) provide a secure environment nationwide for the polls. The Minister responded that the Ministry would do what it could. It planned to engage 75,000 "temporary" police to maintain order leading up to and during the election. It would attempt to recruit these temporary police from the ranks of ex-police and ex-military. (Note: This number of "temporary" police would greatly exceed that of the regular Nepal Police force, which currently numbers only about 55,000, with another 23,000 in the Armed Police Force. End Note.) Sitaula was not able to explain where the Ministry would find enough qualified recruits if sufficient ex-police and ex-army failed

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to step forward.

#### U.S. Resettlement Preparations Moving Forward

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14. (SBU) The Ambassador noted that, based on the GON decision to allow third-country resettlement of Bhutanese refugees, the U.S. and its partner, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), were moving quickly to establish the infrastructure for U.S. refugee resettlement processing in eastern Nepal. He acknowledged that the Chief District Officer (CDO) of Jhapa District had expressed a preference that the Overseas Processing Entity (OPE), which IOM would operate, be based in the district capital of Bhadrapur; the U.S., however, planned to establish it in Damak, closer to the refugee camps and the site of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) sub-office. He hoped the CDO could support that decision. The Ambassador told the Minister that IOM staff were already arriving in Nepal to prepare for a Department of Homeland Security (DHS) visit. DHS officials wanted to conduct refugee adjudications as early as September or early October.

#### Ensuring Security in the Refugee Camps

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15. C) The Ambassador stressed that this huge humanitarian operation could not proceed until the GON had restored security in the refugee camps so that UNHCR and resettlement countries could do their work in safety. Refugees needed to be able to decide for themselves whether to seek resettlement without fear of violent intimidation by other refugees opposed to the resettlement option. Minister Sitaula informed the Ambassador that the situation in the camps at the moment was "peaceful," but that the Ministry was instructing the CDO to deploy 25 police officers to each of the seven camps. (Note: Per UNHCR, currently about six police are on duty in each camp during daylight hours. End Note.) He expected this would improve security sufficiently for processing to proceed. The Minister observed that deploying more police in the camps would not permanently

solve the Bhutanese refugee problem. Ultimately, it would be necessary to find a political solution. The Ambassador agreed, adding that the U.S. would continue to try to win over pre-repatriation refugees to the proposition that their fellow refugees had the right to choose resettlement if they wanted. The Ambassador stressed, however, that a small minority of troublemakers in the camps was to blame, and that resettlement processing could not be put off indefinitely while a compromise was sought. The Minister and Ambassador concurred that third-country resettlement of thousands of Bhutanese, rather than taking pressure off the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGOB), would rather internationalize the issue and put pressure on the RGOB to acknowledge and repatriate its nationals. For example, said the Ambassador, thousands of former Bhutanese refugees in the United States writing to their Congressmen and women would not go unheard.

#### Furthering the Peace Process

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16. (C) The Minister asked the Ambassador for advice on how to further the peace process. He conceded Nepal's unelected parliament and unelected government were weak. Nepal needed the support of the international community, Sitaula stated, to bring all the competing factions into a democratic settlement. The Ambassador agreed that international support was necessary, and the United States would assist to the extent it could. He suggested, however, that the Home Ministry's objective at this point should be to convince the Maoists and Madhesi extremists that violence would not be tolerated and that their efforts to force the postponement of the election would fail. If Nepal did not hold the election in November, the Ambassador warned, then there would not be one in the near future. But if the election were a success, in two years the Constituent Assembly would likely produce a good constitution. The best thing the Home Ministry could do

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for the country would be to see to it that the police enforced the law.

Comment

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17. (C) Home Minister Sitaula's plan to add 75,000 temporary police to the rolls is a good start, although it will be a challenge to meet that hiring target. In past elections, the Home Ministry brought on temporary police also, but not in such large numbers. Security for the Constituent Assembly election will be different from past elections because the Nepal Army is not permitted to play any role. The peace agreements proscribe the Army's involvement. Post is pleased Sitaula plans to deploy additional police to the Bhutanese refugee camps. Now, if he will only give them, and the rest of the Nepali Police and the Armed Police Force, orders to use their authority to keep the peace, peace may stand a chance.

MORIARTY